



May 2016

Dear Incoming 8th grade Pre-AP, Regular, ESL students and parents,

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing our 8th grade students with a challenging and rewarding curriculum, the Johnston Middle School Language Arts Department has created a summer reading program for our 8th grade students. We believe summer reading will both enrich students and create a strong foundation for the reading and writing we will be doing during the 2016-17 school year. Over the summer, students will be required to read one of the following books, Double Identity by Margaret Peterson Haddix or one of the books from the 2014 Texas Lone Star Reading List. The students will complete a project that will account for a significant portion of the first six weeks grade. The assignment is mandatory. These titles are available through the Houston Public Library system, Barnes and Noble, Amazon.com, or you might find them at Half-Price Books.

Choose one of the books below:

Double Identity by Margaret Peterson Haddix (copies available for check-out)

Bethany's life has always been safe and protected. But one day, when she's almost 13, her parents bundle her into the car and drive to Sanderfield, Ill., where they leave her with an aunt she never knew she had and the suspense grows...

2014 TEXAS LONE STAR READING LIST

The Crossover by Kwame Alexander - Fourteen year old twin brothers, Jordan (JB) and Josh Bell (aka Filthy McNasty) are unstoppable on the court. Growing up they face struggles, changes, and challenges.

A Blind Spot for Boys by Justina Chen - Shana Wilde is on a self-imposed boy moratorium. Her priority now is to spend time with her father who is going blind. She and her parents set out on an adventure to walk the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. The last thing she needs is to fall in love, but when Quattro rides into her life in Seattle and shows up in Peru, Shana learns a lesson or two about love and life.

Buzz Kill by Beth Fantaskey - When a highly unpopular football coach is found dead, high school journalist Millie Ostermeyer is eager to uncover the truth, especially when it becomes clear that her father is the chief suspect!

Unbreakable by Kami Garcia - Kennedy discovers she is a member of an ancient society to protect the world from a demon determined to get out of his dimension and into ours. She joins the Legion to find a weapon that can defeat him.

There Will Be Bears by Ryan Gebhart - Tyson is sad to see his grandpa moved to the nursing home that is three hours away. Not only is he losing one of his best friends, he is going to miss out on his first big hunting opportunity. But when grandpa comes up with a plan to take Tyson to kill his first elk in an area with recent bear activity, the hunt is back on.

Forget Me by K.A. Harrington - Morgan Tulley is finally moving on after the hit and run death of her boyfriend Flynn, but when she posts a picture of him online, the face recognition tag suggests another boy named Evan Murphy. Is Flynn really dead or has Morgan been living a lie?

Tut: The Story of My Immortal Life by P.J. Hoover - Instead of dying, like the history books report, King Tut was granted the gift of immortality. He's been fourteen years old for 3,000 years. Suddenly, an enemy returns and Tut has the chance to exact revenge for betrayals long past. But at what cost?

The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, the Blue Death, and a Boy Called Eel by Deborah Hopkinson-Eel is trying to survive the mean streets of 1850s London. Life is hard, but nothing prepares him for the outbreak of

Cholera that kills hundreds in his neighborhood. What can one boy do to help find the cause of the outbreak and end the great trouble?

The Nethergrim by Matthew Jobin - Valiant knight Tristan and the wizard Vithric destroyed the evil Nethergrim in a devastating battle decades ago...as the legend goes. No one knows for sure. The survivors aren't talking, but something dark is brewing. Edmund Bale, an aspiring wizard, is convinced the Nethergrim is back.

The Great Greene Heist by Varian Johnson - Jackson Greene is a con artist trying to go straight since his last botched con lost him his best friend and hopefully future girlfriend, Gaby. However, when he discovers her bid for StuCo President is about to be rigged by his arch enemy, he decides to end his retirement and help ensure her victory.

Proxy by Alex London - Knox has everything a boy born of privilege could ever want including his own proxy, Syd, who takes Knox's punishment for any wrongdoing. When Knox kills a girl in a car wreck, Syd is sentenced to hard labor and death. Syd can no longer accept the hand of fate he has been dealt, so he sets out to change his destiny.

The Fire Wish by Amber Lough - Najwa is a jinni training to be a spy in the war against the humans. Zayele is a human girl unwillingly on her way to marry the prince of Baghdad. But when Najwa is captured by Zayele and is forced to grant her wish of switching places things get interesting.

In the After by Demitria Lunetta - A suspenseful, fast paced, postapocalyptic page turner. Zombielike aliens invade Earth with the single motivation of eating human flesh. Fourteen year old Amy is alone during the attack and the aliens seem to have annihilated all human traces... and so begins her survival story.

The Boundless by Kenneth Oppel - Adventure on the Boundless, the greatest train ever built! Teenage Will enlists the aid of a traveling circus to save the train from villains.

The Kiss of Deception by Mary E. Pearson - Lia doesn't want to marry as an alliance between countries, so she runs away. The prince is impressed by her audacity and tracks her in order to meet her. Meanwhile, a third country wants her dead to keep the alliance from happening, so they send an assassin. Consequences to Lia's decision are devastating. She must return. Time is up; the assassin must kill her and the prince must reveal the truth.

The Haunting of Gabriel Ashe by Dan Poblocki - Gabriel Ashe and his friend Seth spend the summer playing a made up game of princes and monsters in the woods between their homes. It's a game passed down from Seth's older brother who supposedly ran away. What the boys don't realize is that they have awakened an evil spirit and it loves to play games.

Steelheart by Brandon Sanderson - Ten years ago Calamity appeared in the sky, and it gave ordinary humans superhuman powers. They are called Epics, and one of the worst is Steelheart who rules what was once Chicago. Steelheart seems indestructible, but one boy has seen Steelheart bleed and he wants revenge for his father's death.

The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights by Sheinkin, Steve – Little-known Civil Rights milestone: During World War II, black sailors performed the dangerous job of loading ammunition, without training or safety procedures. After an explosion killed hundreds, sailors were court martialed for refusing to load ammo.

Popular: Vintage Wisdom for a Modern Geek by Maya Van Wagenen - Maya finds a copy of a 60 year old guide on how to be popular. She decides to follow the advice given and see how her experiment turns out. She changes her clothes, diet, and most importantly her attitude.

The Thickety by J.A. White - Kara Westfall lives on a remote island in a community known as The Path that abhors witches. Her mother was found to be a witch and was hanged and now, five years later, Kara deals with the aftermath on a daily basis. But when she finds a book in the forbidden forest, known as The Thickety, things will change.

Product for the novel – Due September 22/23, 2016

You may choose from one of the following ideas:

- Create a mobile representing the key events from the book, or
- Write a series of journal entries (minimum 8 entries consisting of 50 or more words per entry) for any of the characters that show his/her point of view about the main conflict in the story.

Assessment - 100 points

- 1 – Project is thrown together in a haphazard manner and does not satisfy project requirements
- 2 – Project somewhat satisfies project requirements but lack creativity, originality or depth
- 3 – Project fulfills requirements and shows some evidence of creativity, originality or depth
- 4 – Project fulfills requirements and shows significant creativity, originality or depth
- 5 – Project fulfills requirements and shows significant creativity, originality and depth

(House J to Ms. Helfman, jhelfman@houstonisd.org); (House M to Ms. Aust, kaust@houstonisd.org); (House S to Ms. Mione, emione@houstonisd.org); (House G to Mrs. Thornburgh-Barron, sthornbu@houstonisd.org)

If you have any questions about the summer reading program, please do not hesitate to contact us via e-mail.

The 8th grade English teachers look forward to spending the 2016-17 school year with you. Happy reading and have a great summer!

Mrs. Helfman
House J

Mrs. Aust
House M

Ms. Mione
House S

Mrs. Thornburgh-Barron
House G